

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-02

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AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 11588

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, NATO, UR, GR

SUBJ: PRAVDA ON NATO AND U.S. BASES IN GREECE

1. PRAVDA ON AUGUST 15 IN A COMMENTARY BY ITS CORRESPONDENT
IN ATHENS (V. DROBKOV) GENTLY PRODS GREECE TO STEP UP PRESSURE
ON NATO AND THE U.S. TO REMOVE THEIR MILITARY BASES FROM
GREEK SOIL. DROBKOV SAYS THAT THE STATEMENT "A YEAR AGO" BY
THE GREEK GOVERNMENT "WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE LED" TO WITHDRAWAL
OF GREEK OFFICERS FROM NATO STAFFS AND UNIFIED COMMAND AND THE
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REMOVAL OF GREEK FORMATIONS OF BATTALION LEVEL AND ABOVE FROM

THE NATO STRUCTURE. THE GREEK STATEMENT ALSO PROMISED THAT U.S. AND NATO BASES WOULD BE LIQUIDATED IF THEY DID NOT ANSWER GREECE'S OWN INTERESTS. DROBKOV REPORTS THAT TWO U.S. BASES HAVE BEEN CLOSED AND THAT U.S. TROOPS ARE IN THE PROCESS OF LEAVING. HOWEVER, HE NOTES WITH SOME PETULANCE, CONSIDERATION OF THE STATUS OF MIXED U.S./NATO AND PURELY NATO BASES HAS NOT EVEN BEGUN, AND GREEK OFFICERS ARE STILL TO BE FOUND IN NATO OFFICES.

2. DROBKOV IMPOSES THAT THE EXPLANATION FOR ALL OF THIS GREEK FOOT-DRAGGING IS THAT GOVERNMENT'S SWALLOWING OF A NEW NATO TACTIC--A SWITCH FROM THE STICK TO THE CARROT. GREECE, HE EXPLAINS, IS NO LONGER BEING SUBJECTED TO A BARRAGE OF WESTERN STATEMENTS THREATENING A CUT-OFF OF ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AID AND POSSIBLE BLACKBALL ON ENTRY INTO THE EC. RATHER, IT IS NOW RECEIVING "NEW FOREIGN LOANS" AND EVEN \$150 MILLION IN U.S. ARMS AID.

3. DROBKOV CONCLUDES WITH A NEW PROTESTATION OF FAITH IN THE WILL OF THE GREEK PEOPLE TO "TEAR THEIR COUNTRY AWAY FROM NATO'S MILITARY CHARIOT" AND PURSUE THEIR OWN TRUE NATIONAL INTERESTS. THE FACT THAT DROBKOV WAS CALLED ON TO MAKE SUCH A PROTESTATION, HOWEVER, IS PERHAPS AN INDICATION THAT RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS HERE ARE CONCERNED THAT GREEK INTENTIONS TO CARRY THROUGH ON THEIR ORIGINAL THREATS ARE LESS AND LESS LIKELY TO MATERIALIZE IN PRACTICE AS LONG AS GREECE'S ECONOMIC AND OTHER TIES TO NATO STATES REMAIN CLOSE.

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